

THE NEW CITIZEN'S POINT OF VIEW

The Larger Loyalty



Mrs. Charles L. Tiffany
Chairman, Borough of Manhattan Woman
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THE only way we can profit from women's votes is by keeping them honest. And in order to be honest they must be independent of the parties even when they are within the parties.

By that I mean that a woman who is a regularly enrolled Democrat should feel under no obligation to vote a straight Democratic ticket at election if any candidate selected at the primary is one of whom she does not approve. I made this statement in a speech one day not long ago and was amazed when the speaker who followed me, a man who had seemed in perfect accord with my principles throughout the suffrage campaign, opposed everything I had said. He maintained that loyalty to the party of which one is a member is the first duty—that because we live in a democracy ruled by the majority it is necessary to abide by the will of the majority even in the selection of a candidate at a primary, and to vote at election for that candidate whether one approves of him or not, simply because he has been chosen.

That apparently is the point of view of the typical party man, accustomed for years to constant compromise with conditions he feels he cannot wholly change. Women, coming into politics with a code of ethics still unclouded by the necessity of having to do the expedient instead of the ideal thing, should have the courage to be independent. So I want to repeat one of the slogans of your New Citizen's page: *Use your party; don't let it use you!*

We are justified in expecting a great deal of the ballots cast by middle-aged women at this next election. The new votes we have always had before were those representing the unlinked opinions of the lad of twenty-one. This time we will have the fresh votes of seasoned minds, combining with wisdom of years all the youthful enthusiasm and vigor that come with a new experience.

It ought to be a wonderful election!
K. E. TIFFANY.

If a Woman Were Park Commissioner

By FRANCES DUNCAN MANNING

THE feminine mind, the same sort of masculine helplessness and curious angle of vision are shown in the construction of the small city parks that women suffer from in man-planned kitchens. The things in themselves are well enough in intention, but are exasperating in their needless inconvenience.

These small parks, such as Jackson Park, Stuyvesant Square, Washington Square, St. Gabriel's Park, are in densely crowded districts, where the park's existence as a breathing space is very necessary. In the summer they fairly swarm with mothers and babies, with baby carriages and little toddlers, and active and energetic three and four-year-olds. Larger children go to more inviting playgrounds, or else are at work. And yet these parks are about as well adapted to their "constituency" as the man-designed kitchen, with its sink at a back-breaking height and its laundry tubs carefully set where no light falls on them, is adapted to the woman who works there—unless it be that the men who fill the iron benches are the "constituency" and being voters, for them the park was arranged.

Now, however, the mothers who push the baby carriages are also voters. They begin to wonder at benches rigorously divided off so that a sleepy three-year-old cannot possibly stretch out and take a nap, but has to be laid in a carriage, draped across another sound asleep baby, while his legs and heavy little head dangle uncomfortably. For the unsteady babies there is the dusty asphalt to tumble on, while the grass that their little feet couldn't possibly hurt is inexorably kept from them. Little children seem to have a primitive, passionate longing to run on the grass, and as far as meeting the human need goes, nothing could be more cynical than the sight of a heavy-footed park attendant walking about in the sacred grass space spearing dandelions with his sharp-pointed stick, while the babies look yearningly through the bars and sometimes wriggle desperately across to get nearer to that beatific vision of dandelions.

"But, mother!" I heard a three-year-old Bostonian remonstrate as his parent dragged him away from some forbidden joy—"but, mother, what is the park for?"

There is no damage the babies could do to the grass that could not be counterbalanced by a good soaking, such as it rarely gets, applied after the manner familiar to every suburbanite. That is, the hose is laid down on the grass, allowed to run, and shifted when one place is thoroughly wet to another site. I have seen a policeman hale adventurous babies from the sacred grass of Washington Square. "Must look after the grass," says he. And this was during a three weeks' drought in a blazing summer, weeks during which that same sacred grass was given never a drop of water to help it through, although all the time the nearby



As it is

fountain was cheerfully and continuously spouting. Says Browning—"Oh the man's thought! No woman's such a fool!"

The first thing a woman park commissioner would do would be to allow the babies on the grass. In such a park as Stuyvesant Square the various sections could be used in rotation, so that each would bear the burden of baby feet no oftener than once a week.

Aside from the advantage to the babies of tumbling on the grass instead of the asphalt, it would be a pretty sight for grownups to watch the charming world-old yet perennially new baby plays, to see "Ring-around-a-rosy" or "Here we go round the mulberry bush" danced on the grass.

A woman would probably take the ban off the hand organ man and let him come into the little parks. Certainly it would delight the juvenile fellowship, and they could dance to the strident music much better than on the sidewalk—and this, like the ring-plays, is a pretty thing to watch.

A woman commissioner would have flowers in these parks: not elaborate bedding out arrangements, but a perennial border full of blooming things that city children long to

know. There would be "something doing" in it from the first snowdrops in February to the last Christmas rose in December, and then there would be enough berried shrubs to keep color and heart in the little park until the crocus came again. There should be flowers enough so that on certain days the woman caretaker could give every small visitor one to take home. Instead of the railed off fountain in the centre a woman park commissioner would put a shallow accessible pool, where youngsters could sail their boats.

Beside the little comfort station a woman would put a place of out-of-door comfort, a wide low pergola, well shaded with vines. It need not be of elaborate construction, but it should have wide, long seats and some tables of heavy material. Here a mother could nurse her baby, and here, when the sun was hot, the children could play in the shade. There would be simple play material in charge of the attendant which could be loaned to young visitors—skipping ropes, roller skates, a game of ring-toss and the like. At the tables the children could play together at quiet games or sit and read or draw.

This is not proposing a several thousand dollar appropriation for a playground, but merely pointing out what could be done in any of the small parks to make them 75 per cent more efficient, with practically no increase in expense.

It may be urged that these suggestions are not considering the "park fans," the men who fill the iron benches, many of them coming early to get the shady seats—the human flotsam and jetsam that collects in these small parks like driftwood on a beach. These a woman would treat exactly as she treats an accumulation of material in a storeroom or attic. She would sort them out and put them in their right places. For the human dervish's problem neither the park bench nor the policeman's "move on" is a satisfying solution. Undoubtedly there are places in the city where each would find the care or assistance that he needs; but these men, some idlers and loafers, some weak and ill, some failures and misfits, lack the initiative to find their way of escape. Here, without the trouble or expense of seeking them out, is a varied collection of the



As it should be

men who obviously do not know how to make the best of their lives.

A woman commissioner would suggest the establishment of an outdoor clinic, held at certain hours in the park, detail an expert psychologist, who would send one man to a hospital, another to a convalescent home, and a third to a cure for alcoholism. Another needs the public library, or perhaps a free evening school; many should be directed to the municipal employment bureau. This method would not only clear the park benches of undesirables, but would be as well a very direct social service, a protection to others in the park.

During the summer months a woman park commissioner would see to it that the physicians who in term-time inspect the school children should inspect the children who mingle freely in the small parks, to insure that no transmissible disease is present to be carried from sick to healthy children.

There are plenty of other things that a woman would do with each of the little parks; these are a few of the things she would do first.

"But this sort of thing is not done!" says the male voter. "Parks are not treated in this fashion—a park is asphalt and iron benches and a little shrubbery, as it always has been—not a community centre!"

My dear sir, you do not understand the workings of the feminine mind. A woman may be indirect in dealing with men; she is directness itself in dealing with problems. She has a serene disregard of political precedent. Besides, if a few ultra-radical souls had not centuries ago undertaken the unheard of task of crossing the Atlantic, what would this, our United States, be now?

Arnold Bennett illustrates well the feminine method of tackling a problem. A good woman, he says, once wished her husband to change his style of hat.

"But, my dear!" he protested, "I have always worn this kind of hat. I could not possibly wear a soft hat!"

Whereat she marched him to a hatter's, where hat after hat was tried on his reluctant head until at last she was suited. She gave the offending tile to a shop attendant and marched her husband out again wearing on his head the hat he repeatedly had said he couldn't wear.

"There, now, you see how impossible it is!" she said triumphantly.

So with the parks. Give women a chance at them and they will invest them quickly with a certain lovable humanness and adaptation to the human demand about them.

Instead of the present ready-made, cast-iron quality which is stamped on all alike, they will acquire a wholly new charm and attractiveness, each different from the other, as the needs of the different communities vary.

City—State—Nation

Items selected from "The Information Bulletin for Voters," issued weekly by the New York State Woman Suffrage Party

CITY:

The Board of Aldermen has approved granting \$4,650 to the Board of Elections for the printing of maps of assembly districts and other expenses incident to the enrolment of women for the primaries, May 25. (Any one desiring to obtain maps should apply to the Board of Elections for them.)

Commissioner of Accounts Hirschfield, who has been investigating the Street Cleaning Department, reports "that in the past four years hundreds of thousands of dollars have been wasted because of the practice of hiring emergency labor."

STATE:

Governor Whitman has signed the following bills, making them law:

Three measures providing for the education of illiterates:

The Lockwood-Meyer bill, arranging for the training of teachers to teach adult illiterates;

The Meyer bill, making compulsory the attendance at school of illiterate minors between sixteen and twenty-one, and penalizing both minors and their employers for disregarding the law (this bill forms an important step in the Americanization campaign, since it makes it impossible for employers to engage workers between these ages who are ignorant of the English language); and

Assembly Int. No. 1200, which extends night school provisions in order to make the foregoing measures possible.

The Adler bill. This makes necessary "special classes for physically defective children in a city or union district where there are ten or more such children."

Two Thompson bills. One provides for the establishment in New York City of a branch of the State Public Employment Bureau for negroes. The other extends the civil rights of negroes.

The Nicoll bill. It forbids the employment of girl messengers under twenty-one, and limits their working hours to fifty-four a week, between 7 a. m. and 10 p. m.

The Wagner bill. This gives the State Food Commission power to fix retail prices on necessary foodstuffs.

The Wicks bill. A measure extending the period allowed for cold storage from ten months to twelve, and providing that reports be made to the State Department of Foods and Markets instead of to the State Department of Health.

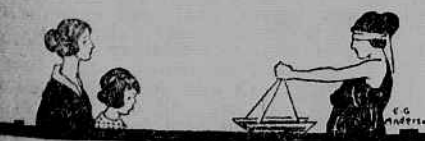
The Wagner bill. This gives the Board of Magistrates of this city power to hold a special court for women during the day instead of at night.

The Cowee bill. Forbids junk dealers and pawnbrokers to buy from children under sixteen.

NATION:

The Overman bill, giving the President power to consolidate and reorganize executive departments, has been passed. All amendments providing exceptions to this law were rejected. The housing bill has passed the Senate. This provides \$60,000,000 for the housing of industrial workers and government employees.

WHAT THE LAW ALLOWS: ELECTROCUTING CHILDREN



THE law of New York State permits the electrocution of a child seven years old!

When a child commits a crime for which the penalty for an adult is less than life imprisonment or death he does not suffer the full penalty of the law. This provision is made in the juvenile delinquency act of 1909, which reads as follows:

"A child of more than seven and less than sixteen years of age who shall commit any act or omission which, if committed by an adult, would be a crime not punishable by death or life imprisonment, shall not be deemed guilty of any crime, but of juvenile delinquency only."

But if the child has killed some one, and there is "proof that he has sufficient capacity to understand the act or neglect charged against him and to know its wrongfulness"—in other words, if his mother has taught him the Ten Commandments and told him it is wrong to kill—he may pay the full penalty, even if he is only seven years old. And the penalty for murder in this state is death.

"But," the casual reader will say, "surely, no jury would invoke the extreme rigor of the law to impose the death penalty upon a child!"

Yet just this very thing is done, and done frequently. Two children are now in the death house at Sing Sing, under sentence of electrocution. They are each over seven years old. It is true, but legally they are infants. They are not yet old enough to vote, to make binding contracts, to contract marriage. For every civil action by or against them a guardian must be appointed by the court, and the Court must approve all the acts of

the guardian. Yet when they do wrong they are considered old enough to bear full responsibility for their wrongdoing without the protection of a guardian, and to pay for it the price of life itself.

One of these children is John Kushniruck, a Russian. He ran away from home at sixteen and came here, with no knowledge of our language. While he was trying to find work he fell in with criminal companions, who told him that it was impossible to get a job without good clothes, and that the only way to get good clothes was to steal them. He was caught in the theft and sent to Elmira Reformatory, but released within the minimum time for good behavior.

His companions, however, had not lost their influence over him, and before long he was implicated in a drunken brawl, during which an innkeeper at Elizabethtown, in Essex County, was shot to death. John was convicted of the murder. He was eighteen years old. He has been sentenced to die in the electric chair on Thursday, May 16.

There is no special sentimental appeal in this case. The boy is not a typical victim; he is not a boy who can be said to be suffering from his first mistake. There are only two things in his favor—his youth and his ignorance. And the question is not whether or not he was guilty of the crime; the question is whether it is fair to fasten the responsibility of such a crime upon one so young and so pitifully handicapped.

The other case is more appealing. It is that of Paul Chapman—a boy without criminal record, who has been convicted of a murder on circumstantial evidence in the face of proof that he was never in the house where the crime took place.

The main facts are familiar to newspaper readers:

On October 19, 1917, witnesses said, a nineteen-year-old boy, Hughes Davis, living

in Brooklyn, planned a burglary with his brother, Leonidas, and asked Paul Chapman, sixteen, to act as watcher. It was testified that originally Hughes had intended to use a black-jack to carry out the job, but that Paul protested so vigorously against any violence that Hughes decided to use chloroform instead, leaving his revolver on the table. Instead of finding in the house only a man and his wife, however, as he had expected, Hughes discovered that there was another man there, and this man was disposed to defend himself. The testimony revealed that Hughes raised his arm as if to strike, and that at this point Paul ran out of the back yard where he was watching. He never even entered the house where the crime took place.

A few minutes later Hughes was shot dead by a policeman in the dumbwaiter shaft, where he was hiding.

Back in the apartment a man was found dead—killed with a revolver. Paul Chapman and Leonidas Davis were both indicted for the murder. Leonidas brought testimony to show that he was at home and in bed when the crime was committed, and won his acquittal. Paul was convicted and sentenced to death under the law that provides that when a homicide is committed by a person engaged in the commission of, or in an attempt to commit, a felony, whether the killing is intentional or not, it is murder in the first degree. The interpretation of this law may be made to include as guilty a man who was not even present when the felony was carried out if he participated in planning it. The extreme rigor of the law, however, is seldom invoked. This is the first time, as far as can be learned, that it has been applied in New York—and it has been applied to a child!

The jury—a jury composed largely of men with sons of their own—stayed out just thirty minutes and brought in a verdict of guilty. They said the judge's charge that they bring this verdict left them no alternative. Yet since the trial all of these twelve men have signed a petition asking that the boy be shown clemency.

But never mind that. Never mind the fact that one of the jurors says he cannot sleep for thinking of the boy who is going to the chair. Never mind that those who know him best say that Paul Chapman is not a bad boy—that he is healthy, normal, cheery, industrious; never mind that the prosecuting attorney, on the other hand, dismissed this character testimony as "sentimental dribble," told the jury that the young fellow had a "crooked heart," that "the facts crucify him." Never mind that these very "facts" amounted to nothing but circumstantial evidence!

Never mind if twenty people with their own eyes had seen him commit the murder. Should a box of sixteen be electrocuted, whatever he has done?

It is said that often three-fourths of the inmates of the death house at Sing Sing are boys under twenty-one.

If children go wrong this way, where does the fault lie? Is it original sin in the chil-

dren? Or are the conditions with which we surround them such as to make them unfit to cope with life? And if the conditions that surround them are so bad that they become criminals before they are old enough to sign a contract or cast a vote, should they or society bear the burden of what they do?

There is another question the New Citizen would like to ask: When will public prosecutors cease to feel that the office requires them to secure convictions, and become convinced instead that its object is to obtain justice?

Paul Chapman's case has been appealed, and a new trial with another judge and jury will be asked for in the Appellate Court. But there is no money back of him—his mother works for a living, and has said that for this reason she has been only a "half-time mother," and perhaps has not done all she might for her boy. And we all know that capital punishment is a penalty exacted chiefly of the poor. Besides, it is difficult now, in the face of the wholesale slaughter in Europe, to arouse interest in saving a single life. Human life has been cheapened.

But principles of justice and humanity should endure. They will remain after this war is over.

Don't let the Boche make a Boche of you. If you feel that a boy who in everything else is an infant under the law should not pay a man's price, and more than a man's usual price, for a crime there is strong likelihood he never even thought of committing—write and say it to Governor Whitman. Write to us and let us print your letter on this page. Write to the boy's lawyer, Matthew W. Wood, at 233 Broadway, and let him add the weight of your plea to his own.

When John Kushniruck goes to the electric chair, on May 16, for a crime he was charged with when he was eighteen—and nothing short of a miracle can save him now—remember that though you can do nothing for him, it is

not too late to save the state from executing Chapman. And ask yourself whether women citizens are going to let the electrocution of children go on in New York State without a protest.

A recent dispatch from Chicago to The Tribune refers to the fact that twenty-seven women have been acquitted of murder within a few years by a Cook County jury. Jurors seem to show a chronic leniency where women are concerned, and to be incredibly rigid in the case of a young boy.

MARIE DE MONTALVO



Paul Chapman
Sixteen years old. Sentenced to the electric chair

The Tribune Institute
In the World of Women